

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8838

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 3798

EXDIS

ANKARA FOR THE SECRETARY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH LAMBRIAS

1. TODAY I HAD LUNCH AND A LONG PRIVATE TALK WITH PANAYOTIS LAMBRIAS, UNDER MINISTER (FOR PRESS AND INFORMATION) TO THE PRIME MINISTER. LAMBRIAS, WHO SEES OR TALKS TO CARAMANLIS 8-10 TIMES EVERY DAY AND PROBABLY SPENDS MORE TIME WITH THE PRIME MINISTER THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE PERSON, IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS ONE OF CARAMANLIS' "INNER CIRCLE" AND MOST INTIMATE ADVISORS.

2. LAMBRIAS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS IS VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY NEXT THURSDAY MORNING IN BRUSSELS, AND IS CONVINCED THAT THE SECRETARY AND THE USG ARE AND HAVE BEEN MAKING MAJOR EFFORTS TO TRY AND BRING ABOUT A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT AND AN OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT CARAMANLIS STILL HARBORED SOME DISAGREEMENT WITH US POLICIES AND ACTIONS DURING LAST SUMMER'S CRISIS, BUT THAT CARAMANLIS HAD LONG AGO DECIDED TO PUT THESE BEHIND HIM. HE SAID THAT CARAMANLIS IS SETTING CONSIDERABLE STORE BY THE SECRETARY'S CURRENT VISIT TO ANKARA AS A POTENTIALLY CRITICAL PHASE BETWEEN THE BITSIONS-CAGLAYANGIL ROME MEETINGS LAST WEEKEND AND NEXT WEEK'S SUMMIT MEETING IN
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BRUSSELS.

3. LAMBRIAS SAID THAT DEMIREL HAD PROPOSED A MEETING WITH CARAMANLIS IN BRUSSELS BUT THAT THE WHOLE MATTER WAS STILL "PENDING". HE SAID THAT CAGLAYANGIL HAD PRESSED BITSIOS HARD IN ROME TO INCLUDE IN THEIR COMMUNIQUE THE STATEMENT THAT THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS WOULD BE MEETING LATER THIS MONTH, BUT THAT "ON INSTRUCTIONS" BITSIOS REFUSED TO INCLUDE THE POINT. I ASKED LAMBRIAS IF THIS WAS BECAUSE OF DEMIREL'S LE MONDE INTERVIEW PUBLISHED LAST MONDAY AND LAMBRIAS SAID THAT THAT OF COURSE HAD MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR BITSIOS AND CAGLAYANGIL TO MAKE ANY ANNOUNCEMENT IN ROME THAT THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS WOULD GET TOGETHER. EVEN MORE SERIOUS, HE SAID, WAS CARAMANLIS UNDERLYING APPREHENSION ABOUT THE MATTER. CARAMANLIS WAS OF COURSE OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT "NOT MEETING WITH DEMIREL". HOWEVER, CARAMANLIS WAS EVEN MORE WORRIED ABOUT GOING AHEAD WITH THE MEETING WITH DEMIREL AND HAVING AN UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME.

4. LAMBRIAS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS HAD NOT FULLY ACCEPTED THE TURK EXPLANATIONS OF YESTERDAY CONCERNING THE DEMIREL LE MONDE INTERVIEW. CARAMANLIS COULD UNDERSTAND WHY DEMIREL MIGHT MAKE SUCH STATEMENTS FOR "INTERNAL CONSUMPTION" IN TURKEY, BUT HE FEARED THAT THEY ALSO REFLECTED THE BASIC FRAGILITY OF THE DEMIREL GOVT AND DEMIREL'S OWN PERSONAL WEAKNESS IN TURKEY AT THE MOMENT. ACCORDINGLY, CARAMANLIS TENDED TO REASON, DEMIREL -- IN HIS "ORIENTAL WAY" OF THINKING -- DID NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO BE GOING TO THE BRUSSELS SUMMIT MEETING WITH A HANG DOG OR BESEIGED MIEN, BUT RATHER AS A PROUD, DETERMINED ALMOST ARROGANT TURK LEADER. IF THIS WERE THE CASE, A CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL MEETING COULD HAVE UNFORTUNATE RESULTS.

5. LAMBRIAS SAID THAT HE WOULD BE LEAVING WITH CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS VERY EARLY MONDAY MORNING, MAY 26, FOR THEIR OFFICIAL VISIT TO BUCHAREST FOLLOWING WHICH, ON WEDNESDAY THE 28TH, THEY WOULD PROCEED DIRECTLY TO BRUSSELS WITHOUT RETURNING TO ATHENS.

6. COMMENT: LAMBRIAS DID NOT EVEN HINT THAT CARAMANLIS EXPECTED ANY KIND OF MESSAGE OR READ-OUT ON THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO ANKARA TODAY AND TOMORROW, BEFORE CARAMANLIS DEPARTS
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FOR BUCHAREST - NOR HAS BITSIOS. HOWEVER, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THEY PROBABLY EXPECT SOME KIND OF MESSAGE OR CONTACT FROM THE SECRETARY DURING OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HIS VISIT TO ANKARA. -- AT LEAST, I AM SURE THEY WILL BE HOPING FOR SOME KIND OF COMMUNICATION. THEY PROBABLY ALSO HOPE THAT THE SECRETARY WILL BE DOING HIS UTMOST TO HELP PAVE THE WAY FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL MEETING IN BRUSSELS, EVEN THOUGH THEY WOULD ALSO EXPECT THAT HE NOT TRY AND TAKE ANY

CREDIT FOR BRINGING THEM TOGETHER.

7. ON THE FACE OF THE MATTER, IT WOULD BE THE MOST NATURAL THING IN THE WORLD FOR THE SECRETARY TO SEND CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS A MESSAGE -- PROBABLY THROUGH BITSIOS (IN WHOM, LAMBRIAS SAYS, CARAMANLIS CONTINUES TO HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE AND TRUST EVEN THOUGH CARAMANLIS IS NOT "COMPLETELY SATISFIED" WITH BITSIOS. IN FACT, LAMBRIAS SAYS, CARAMANLIS IS NOT "COMPLETELY SATISFIED" WITH ANYTHING OR ANYBODY - INCLUDING HIMSELF.)

8. HOWEVER, A CASE CAN ALSO BE MADE FOR OUR TOUGHENING UP OUR POLICY AND STANCE TOWARD THE GOG ANOTHER NOTCH. CARAMANLIS RECENT VISITS TO BONN AND PARIS -- AND THE ADDITIONAL PASSAGE OF TIME -- HAVE BROUGHT HOME TO HIM EVER MORE FORCEFULLY THAT GOOD AND ABLE ALLIES, LADEN WITH GOOD WILL AND POTENTIAL LARGESSE -- ARE NOT EASILY FOUND. ON THE WHOLE, WE HAVE BEEN PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING WITH CARAMANLIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT -- AS WE SHOULD HAVE -- BUT I BELIEVE WE MUST INCREASINGLY BRING HOME TO HIM, BITSIOS AND OTHERS, THAT COOPERATION IS A TWO-WAY STREET. WHILE THERE WOULD BE A CERTAIN -- AND PERHAPS DESIRABLE -- AMBIGUITY IN THE SECRETARY'S FAILING TO SEND A MESSAGE TO THEM DURING OR FOLLOWING HIS VISIT TO ANKARA, IT WOULD TEND TO MAKE THEM A LITTLE LESS SURE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH WASHINGTON, AND CARAMANLIS MIGHT MAKE A GREATER EFFORT TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY IN BRUSSELS NEXT WEEK.

9. HOWEVER, ON BALANCE, I BELIEVE THAT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GREECE IS EVOLVING SATISFACTORILY, AND I DO NOT THINK WE NEED TO MOVE TO A STERNER OR TOUGHER LINE -- AT LEAST AS FAR AS THE PRESIDENT OR THE SECRETARY ARE CONCERNED. THEREFORE, I
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RECOMMEND THAT THE SECRETARY SEND SOME KIND OF MESSAGE TO BITSIOS AND CARAMANLIS ABOUT HIS CURRENT VISIT TO ANKARA. IF HE DOES SO, IT WOULD BE BEST TO HAVE IT HERE FOR DELIVERY BY SATURDAY.
KUBISCH

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